

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 05345 250248Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00
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INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
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AMCONSUL LAHORE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5345

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, PINT
SUBJECT: BHUTTO CHOOSES NEW PPP SECRETARY GENERAL

1. PAKISTAN PRESS MAY 24 CARRIES ANNOUNCEMENT THAT
DR. GHULAM HUSAIN, MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, HAS BEEN NAMED
BY BHUTTO AS THE NEW SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PAKISTAN
PEOPLES PARTY (PPP). HE REPLACES DR. MUBASHIR HASAN,
WHO RESIGNED FROM THE POSITION LAST MONTH.

2. GHULAM HUSAIN IS A PHYSICIAN FROM THE PUNJAB WHO JOINED
BHUTTO AND HIS PPP IN 1968. HE STAYED WITH THE PARTY,
WINNING A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SEAT IN 1970, UNTIL FORMER
PUNJAB GOVERNOR AND CHIEF MINISTER GHULAM MUSTAFA KHAR
BROKE WITH BHUTTO IN 1975. HUSAIN FOLLOWED KHAR INTO THE
POLITICAL WILDERNESS AND REMAINED OPPOSED TO THE PM FOR A
YEAR. UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE GOVERNMENT, HE RETURNED TO THE
PARTY'S MAIN STREAM LAST YEAR, MANAGED TO GET BACK IN BHUTTO'S
GOOD GRACES, WAS REELECTED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND
APPOINTED RAILWAYS MINISTER.

3. HUSAIN AND MUBASHIR COME FROM OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE PPP
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IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM. MUBASHIR REPRESENTED THE LEFTIST
"SOCIALIST" ELEMENT IN THE PPP WHILE GHULAM HUSAIN IS SEEN
AS A TRADITIONAL RIGHTIST. HIS APPOINTMENT REFLECTS THE
TURN TO THE RIGHT IN THE PPP WHICH WAS HIGHLIGHTED EARLY THIS
YEAR WHEN ELECTION TICKETS WERE GIVEN TO MANY WHO WERE NEW
PPP CONVERTS AND FORMER PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE MORE TRADITIONAL
POLITICAL PARTIES. HIS APPOINTMENT ALSO SHOWS THAT BHUTTO

CONTINUES TO DEPEND POLITICALLY ON THE TRADITIONAL RULING CLASSES AND IS WILLING TO GIVE THEM A SUBSTANTIAL SAY IN PARTY POLITICS.

4. DR. HUSAIN IS AN AGGRESSIVE AND BRIGHT POLITICAL IN-FIGHTER WHO MAY BE ABLE TO BRING TO THE PPP SOME OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL DISCIPLINE WHICH HAS BEEN SO LACKING IN THE PARTY. FINALLY, IN HIS FAVOR, IS THE FACT THAT SINCE HE RETURNED TO THE FOLD AFTER HIS FLIRTATION WITH KHAR, HE HAS BEEN AN OUTSPOKEN AND VEHEMENT DEFENDER OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND HAS TAKEN THE LEAD IN ORGANIZING PROCESSIONS AND DEMONSTRATIONS IN HIS FAVOR. LOYALTY TO THE PARTY CHAIRMAN IS A NECESSARY TRAIT IN THE PARTY'S SECRETARY GENERAL.

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